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# HISPANIA

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## ON THE TEACHING OF SPANISH

The study of Spanish in the schools of the United States has developed in such a wonderful manner during the last few years that it is rapidly becoming one of the great problems of our educational system. On account of economic reasons we have suddenly awakened to the fact that Spanish is after all the most important foreign language for our school children to learn; and owing to the fact that aside from the economic necessity we are also realizing that the Spanish language is the language of millions of people of Europe and America who are the standard bearers of a great civilization that has developed in Spanish America a great European culture modeled after that of Old Spain, and that this culture deserves the close attention and study of the educated American, Spanish studies, linguistic, literary, historical, social, and what not, are now carried on in this country with increasing vigor and enthusiasm.

It is fortunate that Spanish studies in this country have a few very able leaders, men and women, who have labored not for the last five but for the last twenty-five years, teaching Spanish literature, Spanish history, Spanish ideals, the real spirit of the great Spain of the past and present. But in spite of the noble work already done by many American scholars we need yet to make propaganda for Spanish studies in order to get for them the recognition that they justly deserve. We need to have Spanish taught in our schools for economic reasons. There is absolutely no doubt about that. But we must teach Spanish also for cultural reasons. We should declare that Spanish should also be studied in our schools because it is the language of the Spanish people of Spain and Spanish America, a people who possess a culture inferior to none. We must study Spanish in order to read, speak, and fully appreciate the Spanish language,

which possesses a literature that is inferior to none, and in originality and force superior to many. We must study Spanish literature and history in order to appreciate the great work of Spain in the civilization of the world, in order to appreciate the spirit of Spanish ideals.

Whatever else we may be, we teachers of Spanish are the interpreters of Hispanic culture. That this culture needs sympathetic interpretation is evident to all of us, and we are, as teachers in most fields, mere missionaries among our people. But in the present state of evolution and revolution in education we teachers of Spanish can not merely lift up our heads and speak in general terms about culture, native or foreign, or about international good will. Although our purposes are clear we are concerned for the present with more practical problems. And my own opinion is that our fundamental problem is: How shall we make the teaching of Spanish an essential part of our educational system? No matter what may be said in favor of the teaching of Spanish in our schools and colleges it will be a failure if it is not properly taught, if it does not carry with its other advantages the educational power which American education demands.

Professor Fitz-Gerald of the University of Illinois has said repeatedly that we are all teachers of students rather than teachers of subjects. I fully agree with him, and it is with such a view of education that we should approach the teaching of any subject. When the teaching of Spanish is done as well as our most favored subjects we shall have attained our goal.

I think all will agree with me when I say that the success of Spanish instruction in our schools depends largely on the kind of teachers we have. In order to have Spanish taught correctly and properly in the schools of our country we must first of all see that we have competent teachers. The study of Spanish has developed so rapidly in the United States during the last few years that we are confronted with the difficulty of not finding competent teachers. This situation is, of course, not peculiar to Spanish. The scarcity of good teachers in all subjects is becoming a very serious problem in our country. Spanish is as well taught in our schools as French or Latin and perhaps even as well as English, but we teachers of Spanish must not find comfort in the weaknesses of our neighbors. We must carefully examine our own house and put it in order before criticizing the homes of others.

As long as educators and parents of pupils are satisfied with poor instruction they will get poor instruction. We must create an

atmosphere of efficiency in the teaching of Spanish, and insist that no one be given a position as a teacher of Spanish who is not thoroughly equipped to teach Spanish. But what do we mean when we speak of a competent teacher of Spanish? What should a good teacher of Spanish know? I do not pretend to be an authority on this point, but I think you will all agree with me when I say that a teacher of Spanish should certainly know Spanish. What qualities and equipment should a teacher have to pass as a good teacher of Spanish? We live in a practical world. Even in the educational field one can not pretend perfection. It would be absurd for me to suppose that we can have as teachers of Spanish men and women who must know Spanish perfectly in every respect. We have poor chances of attracting as teachers of Spanish in our schools an Emilio Castelar or a Menéndez y Pelayo. But between these men and the teachers of Spanish who know practically nothing of Spanish we ought to be able to find teachers who possess in some measure the equipment and ability necessary to teach Spanish. I beg to present to you the following outline of some of the things that I think a teacher of Spanish should know in order to be admitted as a teacher in our schools.

He (or she) should be able to speak Spanish correctly. This means that the teacher should know Spanish grammar, use the language currently and fluently, and pronounce it correctly. It is a lamentable fact that many of our teachers of Spanish do not speak Spanish. Many do not even pretend to speak it. How any one who can not speak Spanish well can teach it is beyond my comprehension. I know that the average teacher in the schools of our country conducts his courses in the fashion of the teachers of Latin and Greek. But Spanish is a living language. One who does not speak it really knows little about the language. The spirit of the language is in the spoken tongue. The teacher should be able to speak Spanish in order that he may be able to teach his students how to speak Spanish. To teach Spanish by taking a Spanish text and translating it into English is not teaching Spanish at all. Translation of a text of a foreign language into English is an art, and often a very fine art, especially when the students take the dictionary and underline the Spanish text with an interlinear translation for class use. This method is after all a good way of teaching students a little memory task, possibly teaches a little English on the side, but it does not teach very much Spanish. The Spanish living language, the spoken idiom,

is a thing by itself, something that has an individual soul, which is quite different from looking up words in a dictionary or talking English all the time. But the aggravating side of this whole matter is the fact that a weakness due to necessity is becoming a formal accepted system of language instruction, which actually counts a few defenders. A translation method, I mean a translation method pure and simple, with no teaching of spoken Spanish was never devised by any one as a real system carefully thought out. And I have noticed in recent years that real Spanish teachers who speak Spanish well and pronounce it correctly, and who have a real feeling for the language are gradually abandoning the old, dried-up, artificial, easy-going, translation method.

I have heard on many occasions well-informed teachers of Spanish say that the translation method is a good way of teaching students accuracy by demanding exact and careful translation, and that it is the only way to make students study. Here we have another sign of weakness. The teacher who can not make his students study or teach his students accuracy without resorting to the sleeping- tonic called translation, should abandon the profession. The teacher who is alive and enthusiastic, who understands the spirit of the language, and speaks Spanish well, and this is not impossible, will easily interest his students, keep them busy and make them study their lessons. It is not that I object to translation entirely. I use translation myself once in a while. But what I am opposing, and I shall do it with all the power within me, is to continue with the so-called translation system. The translation excuse is the excuse that teachers who do not speak Spanish want us to accept as Spanish instruction. But we refuse to accept. It is not Spanish instruction. In connection with this first requisite I may bring before you another danger, a greater danger perhaps. One who does not speak Spanish well and who wishes to be in the future a good teacher of Spanish, might get down to business at once and learn the spoken language, either by taking instruction from one who speaks it at home or making arrangements at once to go to Spain or South America during summer vacations. For these teachers there is much hope. There is a class, however, for whom there is little hope. These are few, fortunately, but numerous enough to do great harm. We have many teachers of Spanish who speak Spanish, have a good vocabulary, can say practically anything in Spanish, but who pronounce Spanish in an abominable manner. They pronounce it as if it were English or

Latin. These good people are for the most part persons who have no feeling for language of any kind and who are careless even in the use of their mother tongue. The pronunciation, therefore, of many of our teachers, who really in a way speak Spanish, is bad. Vowels and consonants come forth without the least idea of how they should be pronounced. Spanish *b* is pronounced like English *b*; *d* is pronounced like English *d*. If one calls their attention to the fact that they do not pronounce Spanish *d* correctly, they reply that to pronounce all Spanish *d*'s as in English will do and that the pupils can not learn the two distinctive sounds of the Spanish *d*. These teachers speak Spanish in a style *sui generis*, not as any Spaniard ever pronounces. They pronounce and teach their students to pronounce all *d*'s alike in Spanish, and would therefore with equal logic say that it is just as well to pronounce in English *dis* and *dat* and *de oder* as *this* and *that* and *the other*. And this carelessness is carried to many other Spanish sounds, such as the lengthening and closing of vowels. In Spanish we have no long and very closed vowels. We say *mesa*, *boca* with medium closed *e* and *o* and not *meisa*, *bouca*, with long and closed vowels. In most closed syllables we have really open vowels, such as in *el*, *ser*, and we should not carelessly pronounce *eil*, *seir*, as many of our teachers and students do. As I have stated already, these teachers have followed the wrong path, pronounce Spanish badly, speak Spanish with an incorrect pronunciation, and a change is very difficult, if not impossible. The wrong here was a false conception of the problem. The erroneous notion has gone about that Spanish is an easy language. Spanish is not an easy language. Spanish pronunciation is very difficult. The Spanish vowels are so difficult that very few foreigners ever pronounce them correctly. They must be learned from a native Spaniard, or one who speaks as well as a Spaniard, and preferably one who has studied Spanish phonetics. The consonants likewise present many difficulties. The proper pronunciation of the consonants *d* and *b* (*v*) is the first and easiest test of the pronunciation of one who thinks he knows Spanish.

I insist that the ability to speak Spanish, and speak it correctly, is the first requisite of a teacher of Spanish. I am of the opinion that in teaching Spanish the first thing students should be taught is to speak Spanish. The first thing and the important thing at first is to teach the pupils to speak Spanish correctly and grammatically. By this I do not mean an easy, make-believe conversational method with the use of a little phrase book. I mean teaching the pupils to

speak Spanish with the use of a fairly complete Spanish grammar, doing all or nearly all the instruction in Spanish with a series of exercises on connected topics and with intelligent questions. The course should be conducted almost entirely in Spanish, so that the pupils from the very beginning will get into the spirit of the language. There are many otherwise well-informed people who say that with the conversation in Spanish and no translation one can not teach the students Spanish literature. This argument falls to the ground for the reason that language and literature are not separate things. Spanish language and Spanish literature can not be kept apart, and it is absurd to pretend to study the Spanish language without extensive reading in Spanish literature, or to pretend to teach Spanish literature without knowing the language. Spanish literature is great and beautiful because it is Spanish, expressed in the Spanish language. The language is its soul. We all know that a translation is only half of the original. To appreciate Spanish literature, therefore, the pupils must first learn Spanish and learn it well.

When one speaks of Spanish pronunciation the question arises: What shall we teach, the Castilian or the American Spanish? Those who ask this question are often people who believe that the Spanish of America and that of Spain are almost different languages. Time and again the highest authorities on the matter have told us that the language of Spanish America is fundamentally Castilian, and that it differs little from that of Castile. As to pronunciation, our Spanish colleagues call the standard modern Spanish *pronunciación española* and not *castellana*, and call attention to the fact that in its essential features what was fundamentally Castilian in origin is now the standard Spanish pronunciation of most educated Spaniards.<sup>1</sup>

In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries many dialects or languages were spoken in Spain. The most important of these were the Castilian, the Leonese, the Aragonese, the Portuguese, and, in the Southwest, the Catalanian. By the end of the 15th century, for reasons which we need not discuss here, the Castilian became the language of the court as the official language, and from that time dates the ascendancy of the Castilian over the other languages or dialects of Spain. When America was discovered, therefore, the official lan-

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<sup>1</sup> See especially the article by the distinguished philologist, Menéndez Pidal in *HISPANIA*, February, 1918, and the one by Navarro Tomás, the greatest living authority on Spanish phonetics, in *HISPANIA*, October, 1921.

guage of Spain was Castilian, and this is the language which the Spanish *conquistadores* carried to all parts of the new world. The language that the *conquistadores* brought to America was the Castilian. Spaniards, Mexicans, Chileans, and the rest refer to their mother tongue as Castilian, and rightly so. Castilian, or what we should now with more propriety call Spanish, is what all these people speak. But in most parts of Spanish America and Southern Spain the consonants *ll* and *z* are pronounced *y* and *s* and not *ll* and *z* as they are in modern Castile. Alveolar *s* is also peculiar to Castile. Here we have a real difference in pronunciation. It affects three sounds. These are the *only essential differences*. In all other respects the pronunciation of Spaniards, Mexicans, Chileans, Argentines, etc., is in all essentials the same. Spanish is a very conservative language. The few changes now found in the American Spanish have to do with vocabulary rather than with pronunciation or grammar, and the language of the educated Mexican or Chilean or Colombian is in all respects much closer to the Castilian of Castile than is the English of the educated American to the language of the court of St. James.

But what about the sounds where a difference occurs? For the Spaniard, whether he be a Castilian or a Mexican or a Colombian, the problem is in no sense important. Personally I prefer the modern Castilian pronunciation of these sounds, although I am an American by birth, but if some of my students have the Southern Spanish or American Spanish pronunciation of these consonants I never make them change. For the Spaniard, both pronunciations are correct. In American English some people drop the *r*'s and others do not, but we recognize both as correct. Of course in the schoolroom one has to choose either. One can not attempt to teach both. But it is absurd to insist that the Castilian is the only one that is correct. Both are good standard Spanish sounds.<sup>2</sup> As for a definite choice, however, my own opinion is that in the schools of the United States we should take the modern Castilian as a basis in respect to these sounds as well as to any others, if any more differences of sufficient importance should arise. This opinion seems to be general among the Spanish teachers of the United States.

<sup>2</sup> See the last page of the article of Navarro Tomás above mentioned in *HISPANIA* for October, 1921, where this matter is briefly and clearly discussed. The *y* sound for *ll* is current also in Madrid and New Castile generally.



The ability to speak Spanish and speak it correctly, with a good knowledge of grammar and pronunciation is, therefore, the first requirement for a teacher of Spanish.

This, however, is not enough. There are many other requirements. When I speak of the ability to speak Spanish as of primary and capital importance I hope no one will understand that I believe this is all a teacher of Spanish need to know. Let no one entertain for a moment the idea that a person who speaks Spanish and speaks it well is able to teach Spanish. We speak of it as a necessary requirement to the advantages in general education and training which most of our teachers already possess. Certainly no one should attempt to enter the profession of teaching without a good education; and not only a good college education is necessary, which is, of course, *the minimum*, but a year or two of graduate work will be of great advantage. During the four years that most of our young men and women are in college the aim is to give a broad and sympathetic education. Little specialization can be done until the junior and senior years, and even here educators agree that it is not highly desirable. Specialization, therefore, must be done after college work has been completed. Our teachers of Spanish should take a year or two of graduate work in Spanish in some one of the universities of recognized standing, and where there are professors of Spanish of recognized reputation and ability. Here let me say just a word about graduate work in general. Graduate work in the universities of the United States has become a contagion. Small colleges and universities that have no library facilities, no able and well-trained teachers, no scholars of reputation in their field of work, offer graduate courses to students, and attract students through fellowships and other inducements, to follow so-called graduate courses, which are of a character not higher than ordinary junior or senior work. The teacher of Spanish should remember that there are very few universities in our country where real graduate work in Spanish can be done under the guidance of really competent scholars; and young teachers should not waste their money and time, doing so-called graduate work where there are no teachers who can inspire and teach. A year or two of real graduate work in one of the universities of recognized standing and where teachers can come into contact with Spanish scholars who are at the same time scholars and teachers will be of the greatest advantage.

So much, then, for this phase of the educational equipment of our teachers of Spanish, a preparation which, of course, we can not dispense with, and one that is possible to every one. When school boards and parents interested in real educational work demand that teachers of Spanish be not only graduates of colleges and universities, but that they must also have pursued a year or two of graduate work in some university of the class already mentioned, we shall have in most of our high schools teachers of Spanish that should be able to teach Spanish with success. Although this is a matter of capital importance, I do not place on it the emphasis that I place on other matters, for the reason already indicated, namely, that our teachers of Spanish are, on the whole, well prepared in so far as mere collegiate education is concerned. The only point that we must emphasize is the question of the graduate training and the choice of university. It is, of course, clear to every one that continual attendance at a *make-believe summer school* does not always mean graduate work. Graduate work is not merely taking a certain number of courses and getting a passing mark. It means or should mean getting into the spirit of language and literature; it means sympathy with the ideals and culture of the people whose language one attempts to teach; it should mean original investigation and the proper interpretation of truth. We should in the near future give in our universities courses on the interpretation of Spanish ideals and courses on the history of Spanish culture. In some of our great universities we find that for years there have been such courses taught for the interpretation of the civilizations of Germany and France. In one of our large universities there is a professor of the history of French culture. As for Spanish there is now a necessity absolutely imperative that the culture of Spain be interpreted. And when I say the culture of Spain I do not mean only the Spain that is limited by the Bay of Biscay on the north and the Mediterranean Sea on the south. I mean the great Spain, of the past and present, the Spain of the Cid, the Spain of Santa Teresa, the Spain of Catholic Kings Ferdinand and Isabela, the Spain of Junípero Serra and the rest of her noble men and women.

Our teachers of Spanish should on all occasions teach American students the truth about Spain and South American countries and interpret sympathetically and from first-hand knowledge the ideals of the Spanish people. For this reason, over and above all the requirements necessary for a teacher of Spanish in our schools and colleges

is the all-important knowledge of things Spanish. At the present time, when there seems to be a tremendous purely commercial interest in things Spanish, especially with respect to our diplomatic, political and business relations with Spain in America, it is imperative that we understand the history and culture of all Spanish-speaking peoples. As a basis we have in all South America the history, the culture, the traditions and ideals of Spain. The proper interpretation of the rôle of Spain in the history and civilization of the world, therefore, is a problem of capital importance in our country. It is the duty of educators, teachers of Spanish especially, to study this problem with all possible attention and care, and when our teachers have this knowledge it is their duty to teach the truth. Those who wish to get first-hand information, those who wish to understand Spanish character as it truly is must either travel extensively in Spanish countries or study Spanish literature and the histories of things Spanish in Spanish books. Literature, as every one knows, is a true record of character and ideals. The character of the Spanish peoples, their ways of thinking, their ideals, their weaknesses and their virtues are depicted in their literature. But even among Spanish authors one has to be able to select those that are genuinely Spanish and truly representative of their race. And the teacher of Spanish in our schools has to know who are the authors that are Spanish in spirit and must use their books in classes. And here we come to another great problem in our Spanish instruction. We must use today the literature of the Spain of the twentieth century for our school texts. Spanish literature today is a different thing from the Spanish literature of the last centuries. We must, of course, always read some of the old masters, but the ideals and progresses of the Spain of the present must be learned from modern literature. Galdós, Unamuno, Martínez, Sierra, Marquina, Ricardo León, Concha Espina, the Quintero brothers, are some of the real representatives of the soul of Spain. In Spanish America we have José Ingenieros, José Enrique Rodó, Rubén Darío, and others. If one wishes to study about Spanish character, to understand the ideals of Spain, one should study the critical works of Menéndez y Pelayo, the novels of Pereda, the novels of Galdós, Concha Espina, and Ricardo León, the dramas of Marquina, of the Quintero brothers, and of Martínez Sierra. In the work of the latter we find the Spanish ideals not merely recorded but idealized. Martínez Sierra has idealized the noblest instinct of all, the instinct of motherhood, a Spanish ideal, and one of Spain's national virtues. When one

reads his plays one can fully appreciate the art of Murillo and his incomparable *concepciones*. This veneration of motherhood, so admirably developed in the art of Murillo and the plays of Martínez Sierra is one of the cardinal virtues of the Spanish race, and every one who has visited a Spanish home and seen a picture or a statue of the mother of Christ realizes it.

Spanish literature is a reflection of the ideals of Spain and must develop in harmony with the traditions and ideas of the race. Foreign writers complain that the Spanish realistic novel is really not realistic because it differs from the French realistic novel. And Martínez Sierra, that great interpreter of the ideals of the Spain of the twentieth century, replies: "The Spanish realistic novel must always be poetic if it is to be an image of truth. Spain is a romantic country, romantic in a sane manner: there are yet left in Spain a few virtues that give our country freshness and life. When we compare our realism with that of other countries—France, for example—we see this clearly. Modern French novels are often translated into Spanish, and when we read them they always give us a sensation of dry and decaying fruit. Our own realistic novels have the freshness of life and the vigor of sane ideals. In our country sin has not yet taken the trouble of calling itself a science, and virtue is still prevalent in some places; and there are yet ballads that sing its praises, and we yet have the courage to call bad deeds many things which in other countries usage has sanctioned as perfectly proper."<sup>2</sup>

In order to understand the Spanish peoples of Spain and the new world we must, therefore, study their literature in all its manifestations. When we understand well the culture and civilization of these people by a sympathetic study of their art, their literature, their life, their commerce—in short, their character and ideals—we shall have taken the first step in the direction of lasting progress and lasting peace and good will between the two great civilizations of the western hemisphere, the Anglo-Saxon civilization of the north with its great material prosperity, its scientific efficiency, its practical aspect, its democracy of opportunity, its love of peace and work, its wonderful educational system and its practical sense of justice, and the Spanish civilization of the south, with its love of the traditional virtues, its lofty idealism, its humanism, its love for family ties and veneration

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<sup>2</sup> *La Vida Inquieta* (1913), pp. 96-97.

of motherhood, its artistic temperament, its deep religious instinct, and its new scientific and educational activities.

Having stated the principal requirements which I should expect of a modern teacher of Spanish and the ideals which we must seek to better the teaching of Spanish in our schools and colleges, I pass now to a discussion of problems directly related to teaching. The first which demands our attention is the value of our subject. I agree with Professor Warshaw that we must present our case, show the real values of things Spanish, lest the "Moors on the coast" confuse us and rout us.<sup>3</sup> We should not be mere propagandists of our subject, but certainly we should be propagandists of the truth. If Spanish culture is not inferior to French or Italian culture we should say so, and in no uncertain terms. If Spanish literature is as great as that of France and England we should make it known to the American public. "The Moors on the coast" are always active against us. In a recent article published in *The Modern Language Journal* (Vol. IV, p. 26), we find recorded the opinion of a German teacher who suggests that German and French are the only foreign languages that may be recommended for the vitality of their literature. To combat ignorance of this kind we must use the weapons of education which Professor Warshaw suggests. Even our enemies will learn. One who states that Spanish literature is not one of the great literatures of the world is merely ignorant. And when to ignorance is added envy the result may not be very fruitful for the pursuit of truth. Ignorance and envy can be wiped out by education only. That they have raised their venomous heads is evident. An example in point is the situation in the State of Kansas, where a body of modern-language teachers attempted with all the official power in their capacity to prevent the establishment of a local chapter of The American Association of Teachers of Spanish. The hopeful sign is to be found in the fact that their mischievous plan failed.

When we criticize our weaknesses in our Spanish program, therefore, let no teachers of other languages use that as an argument against us. In the first part of this article I have called attention to the principal weaknesses of our Spanish teachers. I have not ventured to say modern-language teachers, because I am primarily interested in Spanish, which is the problem before me. I am aware of the fact, however, that modern-language teachers in other fields are

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<sup>3</sup> See HISPANIA for November, 1919; also his splendid article in the May number of this year.

equally weak. In French our teachers are woefully weak, as much so as in Spanish. In the East, French has been on the curricula of our schools and colleges for a generation, and no more effective teaching is done than in Spanish, which is a recent comer. The statement of President Butler, of Columbia University, published in the *Educational Review* of January, 1919, so often quoted, is a fair and honest criticism of our language teaching. The statement has a general application. Our modern teachers of language must teach literature and language as living things; there must be some practical, cultural element in our language instruction which will remain and become part of the student's mental power. The ideas presented in the first part of this article may help in that direction. Lack of proper preparation on the part of many teachers brought about the failures mentioned by President Butler. In German, most educators agree, the instruction was better. The reasons are to be found in the fact that many of the teachers were German born. However, that sort of a system will not do. American teachers must do in the future 99 per cent of the teaching of Spanish, French, and German. Our observations, therefore, apply to all language teachers. And the two languages which at present are considered the most important foreign languages for our American boys and girls to learn, Spanish and French, will certainly demand in the future teachers with qualifications such as those outlined for the teacher of Spanish.

But, if we have not enough well-trained teachers of Spanish, why teach it? Why not teach German or Latin? These questions are usually asked by "the Moors on the coast." Our whole educational structure is weak. The poorest teachers in some of our high schools are those who teach English. The results are evident. We must better the teaching of the subjects which are of importance to our educational system, and not teach only those which we are told are well taught. Since Spanish is a new subject, and we are now organized to demand that our teachers be well prepared, it will probably be taught in the near future far better than German or Latin, which will follow the beaten path. Spanish teachers in our country have no traditions and no old idols to adore. We are just now writing our textbooks and training our teachers. The future will judge us.

As for Latin, I would not wish to be misunderstood. Spanish is modern Latin. Modern English has important Latin elements. The culture of the Roman world is the basis of modern civilization. I am

frankly of the opinion that an elementary knowledge of Latin, say three or four years of high-school Latin, is absolutely necessary for a general education. Later, in college or university, those who are to teach English or a Romance language should certainly study more Latin. Spanish teachers, above all, should be earnest Latin students. Spanish grammar can not be properly understood without a historical study, and historical Spanish grammar involves a good knowledge of Latin.

And lastly, a few words about methods and pedagogy. I must frankly confess that I have always been an enemy of pedagogy. I have always observed that one who possesses knowledge can impart some of it, and, on the other hand, I have seen dismal failures in teaching when much pedagogy and little knowledge seemed very happily and harmoniously combined. For many years I have heard people speak of methods of teaching, and in many cases the word method merely concealed certain apparent weaknesses. In the case of Spanish many of my pedagogical friends could not converse with me in Spanish. And yet their modern methods carried them along, even when school boards resigned. With many, many such experiences I could not have much respect for methods and pedagogics. These experiences merely show, however, that a large number of language teachers were hiding their weaknesses with the method shield. Many are yet doing it. Of late, however, I am becoming reconciled with pedagogy, and for the following reasons. I have seen a few who preach method and who also have a few other virtues, one of which is a knowledge of the subject. If a teacher has this important virtue, then our modern pedagogical training will be of the greatest possible benefit. Young teachers who start to teach Spanish with a fairly good preparation need the advice and counsel of the superior teacher who possesses the virtues demanded, and who is a master in modern, live methods of teaching.

But there is great danger lest *method* will be emphasized to the point of absorbing all the interest. Our Spanish teachers will get as much benefit from a course in Old Spanish as from a theoretical course on methods. Both are necessary. A teacher can explain the uses of the tenses, the meanings of *ser* and *estar*, the uses of the passive voice, and many other difficult problems far better after taking a course in historical Spanish grammar than by taking a course in methods. So that in spite of becoming reconciled to the pedagogical aspects of language teaching, I am yet firm in the belief

that a knowledge of the subject is the first, fundamental and important virtue. It will not hurt to add a little pedagogy and a little knowledge of methods. Without it, however, there is little use of going ahead.

But even when a good knowledge of the subject is strengthened by courses in Spanish philology, methods, and the reading of pedagogical literature, the teacher of Spanish should not be satisfied. The American teacher of Spanish who is ambitious and enthusiastic will go to Spain for six months or a year, and, if possible, will repeat the experience. A few months should be spent in Madrid at the Centro de Estudios Históricos, where the greatest living authorities on Spanish language and literature are conducting summer and winter courses especially adapted for the American teacher, our distinguished friend and world-renowned philologist, Don Ramón Menéndez Pidal, and his associates, Don Américo Castro, Don Antonio García Solalinde, the distinguished phonetician, Navarro Tomás, and others. It is in the Centro de Estudios Históricos where the linguistic brains of Spain are now active, as Professor Morley has happily said, and our American teachers of Spanish will go there for new learning, new inspiration, and new life.

During the summer of 1921 the Centro de Estudios Históricos held its tenth summer course for foreigners with great success. American teachers in attendance reached a round one hundred. Our Mr. Wilkins was present on the opening day and delivered one of his usually enthusiastic speeches. A brief account of the *Décimo Curso* was published in the November number of our journal, with the speeches of Mr. Wilkins, Menéndez Pidal, and others. In the summer of 1920 our Professor Hills was there on the opening day and gave also a brief address. The present writer, also, has had the opportunity of visiting our Spanish colleagues, visiting their classes in their summer and autumn courses, discussing with them the problems of Spanish teaching, interchange of students and teachers, and kindred subjects. From my own experience and from the numerous experiences of my American colleagues who are intimately acquainted with the work done by the Centro de Estudios Históricos I feel quite sure that the young intellectuals who compose the group led by Menéndez Pidal are our best friends in Spain and are best equipped to be of real service to us. Our relations with them should continue to be most cordial. Our teachers of Spanish in the future will go to Madrid to the Centro as a matter of necessity. They will go there



for the things which we can not give here and which only our Spanish colleagues can give.

Our American Association of Teachers of Spanish was organized for the purpose of bettering the teaching of Spanish in the United States. Since our organization in 1917 we have grown from 400 members to a large and strong association of 1,400 members. Our national officers and committees have done wonders during the last four years in obtaining for Spanish studies the recognition which they justly deserve in the curricula of our schools throughout the country. Spanish teaching is much better than it was in 1917. HISPANIA, our official organ, has contributed its share by publishing a long series of splendid articles on every phase of the teaching of Spanish. Some of these articles have done us a world of good and have commanded the attention of our most prominent educators. All this we have done and will continue to do. But we must not fail to take advantage of every possible opportunity to better the teaching of Spanish, and in the work of the Centro de Estudios Históricos and the most cordial attitude of the men who compose it we have another opportunity knocking at our doors. I would conclude, therefore, by suggesting to our Association to take action at its coming meeting in the direction of some official coöperation with the Centro during the Cursos de Verano. Perhaps we could name an official committee to take up the whole problem with our Spanish colleagues. In fact, I do not see why the Madrid *curso de verano* should not be given henceforth by the Centro and our Association jointly. The mutual advantages to be derived seem to me to be so transcendental that all obstacles will seem insignificant. But even if an actual joint undertaking would not be possible our official coöperation with the Centro is the essential problem, and this I would strongly urge our Association to undertake.

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